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A

S E R M O N

ON THE

RESURRECTION.

By J A M E S O D D I E.

I C O R. XV. 20.

*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first
fruits of them that sleep.*

L E E D S.

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M. DCC. XC.



A S E R M O N, &c.

IT is a warrantable, yea, a laudable custom in our national Church, once in a year to celebrate the most important event of Christ's rising from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion: In conformity to this custom, I have chosen this subject for our present edification. As Christ is said in the text to rise, not as a private, but as a publick person, as the first fruits of them that slept, it will lead me to discourse also of the general Resurrection of all men at the last day. Without farther preface, that you may the better understand my meaning, and more easily retain the matter in your memories, I shall pursue this method.

I. Prove that Christ is risen from the dead according to the Scriptures.

II. That the Resurrection of the bodies of all men are connected with the Resurrection of Christ.

III. Point out the difference betwixt the present body, and what it will be in its resurrection state.

IV. Answer some objections that are made to this notion of the resurrection of the same body that now is.

I. I am to prove that Christ is risen indeed, according to the Scriptures. This is a matter of fact, and therefore must be proved as such, not by abstract reasoning, but by authentic testimonies: It is a matter of fact of the greatest moment to us Christians; for not only our hope of a resurrection at the last day depends upon it, but also the verity of the Scriptures, and especially the divine authority of the *Christian religion*. For if *Christ is not risen, we are yet in our sins*, according to St. Paul. 1 Cor. xv. 17. We can have no safe dependence on his death being an atonement for our sins, if he did not also *rise again for our justification*. Rom. iv. 25.

This event, of so much concern and importance to us, was matter of ancient prophecy: David foretold it. Psal. xvi. 9, 10. *My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.* That the prophet David did not mean this of his own resurrection, but of the resurrection of Christ, emphatically called *the Holy One*, is clear from the argument of St. Paul. Acts xiii. 36, 37. Of David personally it was not true, *for after he had served his generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption. But he whom God raised again saw no corruption.* By the Prophet Hosea, also, chap. vi. 2. *After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.* And both the thing itself, and the time of its accomplishment, were prefigured in the prophet *Jonas* being three days in the belly of the whale. To these predictions of the prophets, Jesus himself often added his own promise to his disciples, while he was yet with them before his passion, though, at that time, they did not perfectly understand his meaning.

Now

Now had this promise of his resurrection been fixed at some distant period of time from that of his death, (like that of the *impostor Mahomet's*, to the term of eight hundred years before he should revive) though there had been no intention to perform it, yet credulous men might have been held in long suspense, without a possibility of detecting the cheat; but Jesus did not so serve his disciples, but told them plainly in *three days* he would fulfil it, and accordingly did.

- This grand truth of our Lord's Resurrection, is attested by the joint testimony of three descriptions of people; some of them faithful friends to Jesus and his holy religion; and others bitter enemies to both.

1. By his faithful friends, his disciples and followers, who had accompanied him through his publick ministry, his bitter sufferings, and attended him to his ignominious death. To these he shewed himself openly after his resurrection, and chose them to be the substantial witnesses thereof. Men who deserve the utmost credibility; plain, honest, and pious men; unlikely to deceive the world by specious pretences, or a false address: Men who were intimately concerned themselves not to be deceived in this matter, their hopes for eternity depending on the truth of it; and who were sure to ruin their reputation with both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, yea, expose themselves to their utmost rage and fury for declaring, and bearing an open testimony of it. These men relate how their Divine Master appeared to them at different times, and gave them unquestionable evidence of his own proper human body after his return from the dead. He first appeared to *Mary Magdalene*, and other devout women, who came with spices and ointments to his sepulchre. John xx. and Mark 16.

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Then to all these women together in their return home. Matt. xxviii. Then to Simon Peter alone. Luke xxiv. Then to the two disciples travelling to a country village, to *Emmaus*. Luke xxiv. Then to the Apostles assembled together in secret for fear of the Jews: And again to the same company, with the addition of *Thomas*, eight days after; at which time he ate and drank with them, and suffered his body to be handled and proved by them. Then to Peter and John, and other disciples fishing at the sea of Tiberias. John xxi. Then to the eleven Apostles upon Mount Tabor. Matt. xxviii. 16. Then to *five hundred brethren at once*, mentioned by St. Paul. Then to St. James, as the same apostle testifies. 1 Cor. xv. Then to all his apostles, disciples, and friends when he ascended from the mount of Olives, in their presence into heaven. Acts i. To which we must add, that after his ascension, to St. Paul himself as he was going to Damascus. 1 Cor. xv.

These are all recorded in the scriptures; and though these appearances were not to all the nation of the Jews indifferently, yet to so many, and such kind of persons as were competent witnesses, having, many of them, been intimately acquainted with him before his death; and his manner of shewing himself to them put it out of all doubt that there could not be any deceit or illusion in the case; the sacred text saith; *He shewed himself by many infallible proofs*; such as eating and drinking together, and speaking of the things that pertained to the kingdom of God, and that repeatedly for the space of forty days. And why should the truth of those witnesses be suspected? They had sufficient conviction to satisfy themselves: Their All was at stake if they were imposed upon: They could have no temptation to impose upon others in a thing which was to their *own hurt*.
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What satisfaction could they take in devising a fable of this kind, which was sure to ruin them for time, as well as eternity? What possible comfort could his dead body concealed among them afford? The *Jews*, who had used all possible precaution to prevent a fraud; had *sealed* the stone, and set a *guard of soldiers*, confess that the sepulchre was empty in the morning; and was reduced to the miserable shift of bribing the soldiers to say, "his disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept." Senseless story indeed! If they were *asleep*, how knew they that the disciples came, and stole him away! If they were *awake*, why did they not prevent his being stolen! Competent witnesses indeed of what passed, while they were asleep!

The thing itself is highly improbable! Could men so dejected, so feeble, so apprehensive of danger as they then were, that they durst not be known to meet; nay not to be seen out of doors, till informed by the women that their Lord was risen; I say, is it likely that they could have courage to attempt such an enterprize? If they had attempted it, is it at all likely they should effect it? How could they break open the door, burst the seal, and carry off their Lord with such deliberation as to leave the grave cloaths wrapped up, and laid by in order, never to be seen or heard by the guards, and the dead body never to be heard of or found after? But allowing all this possible; what profit, what pleasure could they propose to themselves by it? But especially, what account can we give of that sudden and mighty change in these men's tempers and behaviour upon that occasion? For they who but just now had kept close, and were afraid of every thing, now instantly come forth in publick, and with undaunted courage and confidence proclaim this Resurrection, in the hearing,
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and to the face of their bitterest enemies; affirming they had seen him, spoken with him, and handled him: and in confirmation of all this, they were ready to lay down their own lives! This alteration in them is as distant as *life* and *death*! Could all this, think we, proceed from a dead body got into their possession by stealth? It is never to be imagined!

2. *Pilate* considering these circumstances, the unlikelihood of the body being stolen, and the amazing effects this Resurrection had upon the disciples of Jesus, examined into the matter, and got the whole truth out of the guard: The rising of Jesus before their eyes—the terrible earthquake—the opening of the sepulchre—the terror they had been in, which made them desert their post—and that the wicked policy of the rulers of the Jews, had put that ill-contrived story into their mouths, to stifle thereby, if it had been possible, the belief of the Resurrection: All these particulars, *Pilate* transmitted by letter to his master *Tiberias*, (then Emperor,) to Rome; and withall, the examinations and confessions of several who had spoken with such as had risen from the dead at the same time, and appeared to their acquaintance in Jerusalem, and gave them assurance of the *Resurrection of Jesus*.

These informations made such impression upon *Tiberias*, that he communicated them to the *Senate*, and moved that *Jesus* might be admitted into the number of the *Roman Gods*, declaring his own readiness to give the Imperial suffrage and assent to such a decree. And upon the *Senate's* refusal he did not only instantly express his displeasure, but gave free liberty to all that would, to believe in *Jesus*, and prohibited all his officers, upon pain of death, to molest any such for their good affection and zeal for that name.

name. This *Tertullian* asserts in his apology, on his own knowledge, who living in Rome, and being a celebrated *pleader*, in regard to his attainments and quality, had opportunity of inspecting the *records*, and did peruse them accordingly. And *Hegesippus*, another ancient writer, delivers the same account; neither of whom could ever be gainsaid by the *Gentiles* on this point.

3. Neither was this opinion that *Jesus* rose from the dead confined to, and entertained by the *Gentiles* only, for several *Jews* of great learning and authority, then alive, believed it likewise, though they had not the grace to become Christians upon it. This is evident from the story of *Josephus*, written not above forty years after our Lord's passion; who taking occasion to speak of *Jesus* and his disciples, after having mentioned his crucifixion by *Pilate*, at the instance of the *Jews*, and that notwithstanding all that ignominy and suffering, his disciples did not cease to love and honour him still: He adds, that as a reward of their constant affections, *he returned to life again the third day, and appeared to them again.* Which words are so delivered as not to speak the historian's sense only, but also the commonly-received opinion of all sober persons at that time. For there were then many Christians yet living, who had seen and spoken with *Jesus* after his resurrection; and infinite numbers of *Jews*, who from their kindred and friends, that had been eye-witnesses, must needs have heard an account of it.

These testimonial evidences of our Lord's resurrection, from friends and enemies, from *Jews*, *Gentiles*, and *Christians*, in effect, from all the world, have been faithfully handed down to us under the eye of a watchful providence, that took care that

that we should neither be imposed upon by false reports, nor want sufficient evidence in a point of such vast moment to the success of his holy religion, and the comfort and peace of his people in all following generations to the end of time.

II. I am to shew how the resurrection of our bodies, and the bodies of all men at the end of time, is, according to the sacred Scriptures, connected with the resurrection of Christ.

I. It is worth our careful attention, that our Lord did not rise from the dead as an individual person, but as the representative of mankind, for whom he had died. It is true, that it was necessary our Lord should rise again from the dead on other accounts, viz. to fulfil the prophecies; to make good his own promise to his disciples; to make it appear, for our encouragement and comfort, that the sacrifice of his death was accepted of the Father; that the satisfaction for the sins of men was by him received, by the release of the prisoner from the arrest of death; and that he might, in our nature, be invested with all dominion and authority, and enter into his glory as a reward of his suffering. Yet, nevertheless, he rose also as *the first fruits of them that slept*. 1 Cor. xv. 20. He rose as the sure pledge and earnest, that our bodies also shall rise at the last day: And as the first fruits is of the same kind with the whole harvest that is afterwards to be gathered, so also our resurrection will be of the same kind with his: His was a *reproduction* of the same body that lived and died, and so also will ours be.

Yet the Apostle does not leave us to infer merely from Christ's rising from the dead, as a federal head and representative of the human race, that all
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the members shall rise like their head; no, nor from his rising as the *first fruits*, that all the harvest shall be gathered in due season; but also asserts in strong and various terms, the certain and indissoluble *connection* betwixt the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the Saints: (For in this chapter he does not take in the resurrection of the wicked) he fully and repeatedly affirms, if there is no resurrection of the dead yet to be expected, *then is Christ not risen*: verse the 13th of this chapter. As if he had said, These two, the resurrection of *Christ*, and the resurrection of the *Saints*, stand or fall together: The one necessarily infers the other; they are so tied together in the appointment and order of God, whose counsel must stand, that one cannot be true without the other. If it be true that Christ is risen (of which, for my own part, I have had the fullest proof, having seen him with these eyes as I journeyed to Damascus) then it is true also that the dead shall arise. All the solid and unquestionable proofs that have, or can be alledged that Christ is risen, are equal proofs, as strong and conclusive that those who have, and shall yet die in Christ, *shall also rise again*.

How then, say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? ver. 12. As if the Apostle had said, How mean you, who say, there is no resurrection of the dead? Do you consider the consequence of your assertion? What dreadful havock it makes in our reputation? What destruction of the Christian religion? What an everlasting damp it throws on your hopes and prospects in the eternal world? What a gulph of misery and destruction this single assertion, this pregnant womb of error opens for your souls in eternity! On your supposition, *we are found false witnesses for God!* For the God
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of Truth! You have beheld us work miracles; you have seen our unwearied toil and hazard in preaching the gospel; you can testify we have shunned no danger; yea, that we have been ready to lay down our lives in confirmation of the truth we deliver; yet, after all, if your assertion is true; *if there is no resurrection of the dead*; all these fair appearances are but illusions; all our seeming zeal is but wild-fire; we are cheats and liars, because we have constantly testified for God, *that he raised up Christ his Son from the dead*, whom he did not raise, if so be that the dead rise not! *For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ risen.* ver. 16.

What destruction too do you make of the *Christian religion*? You say there is no resurrection of the dead: I say, if so, *Christ is not raised*! What then is the Christian religion but a baseless fabrick? A castle in the air! A senseless fable! The resurrection of Christ is the very foundation of it: If Christ is yet in the grave, the prisoner of death (and yet he is, *if so be the dead rise not*) then he cannot be the *Messiah* promised in the Old Testament: Christianity therefore is but a *fable*, and not a cunningly devised one neither; but as full of *folly* as of *lies*! What an eternal damp have you thrown upon your own hopes and prospects of heaven! For if you are right, *our preaching is vain*; yea worse, it is a lie; *your faith therefore is vain and worthless.* ver. 17. *Ye are yet in your sins*, under the guilt of them, and liable to be damned for them: For I still maintain it, that *if the dead rise not, then is not Christ risen.* ver. 16. Once more, what a gulph of misery are you plunging into? According to your assertion, *that there is no resurrection of the dead*, your body, indeed, is safe; will rot for ever in the grave, and so feel no misery. But what becomes of your soul?

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Can you bury, and rot it also in the earth? If not, what can you look for, but endless misery? For by this *one sentence* of yours, we are made *liars*—You have overturned the very *foundation of Christianity*; you have rendered *our preaching*, and your *own faith*, vain; you have fastened the guilt and damnation of your souls upon your own heads, and what can remain for you but *hell-fire for ever*!

Thus the Apostle proves, beyond all reasonable contradiction, that the Saints will rise again: This is as sure *to be*, as that Christ is *already risen*. Other passages of Scripture as clearly, and more expressly assert the resurrection of the *wicked* also. Our blessed Lord, who is himself the resurrection and the life, plainly and openly declares this truth. *Marvel not at this*, saith he, *for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* John v. 28, 29. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, chap. iv. 16. tells us in what order the dead will rise: *That the dead in Christ shall rise first.* Daniel also declares the general resurrection both of the just and unjust: *And many*, saith he, *that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* Dan. xii. 2. Job too asserted this great article of the Christian Faith: *I know that my Redeemer liveth, could he say, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, this shall not hinder its rising, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes, not the eyes of a new created body, shall behold, and not another, though my reins shall be consumed within me.* Job

xix. 25, 26, 27. Our Divine Master connects the Rewards of Righteousness with the Resurrection of the Body; intimating thereby, that as certainly as he will reward the good, so sure shall the dead be to rise; *when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: For thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.* Luke xiv. 14. Martha of Bethany, said unto Jesus: *I know that he (my brother Lazarus) shall rise again in the Resurrection at the last day.* John xi. 24. This doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead was a common subject of the Apostles' preaching: It was what peculiarly vexed the Sadducees and wicked Rulers of the Jews; and what had, as it was connected with Christ's Resurrection, a principal hand in gathering the Christian Churches. Acts iv. 2. But to multiply more Scripture authorities, as it would be *useless* to Infidels and Sadducees, so it is *needless* to those who believe. I proceed,

III. Thirdly, to consider the difference betwixt the present body, and what it will be in the Resurrection state.

It might easily be allowed, that if the sacred Scriptures had seemed to maintain that the bodies we shall receive back again from the earth, should be in all respects, and in all their properties the same with these we now have; needing the same daily recruits from food and rest; liable to the same pains and afflictions, and having the same passions and propensities to war against the soul; I say, in this case, we might justly have doubted whether we had understood those speeches of the Apostle's as he meant them; and whether having such a body, would have been consistent with the perfection,
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glory, and blessedness the Saints will be advanced to in heaven: But the Apostle explains himself sufficiently on this head. He maintains that it will not be a new created body, either created out of nothing, or out of different matter; yet at the same time he informs us that it will be fashioned anew, and made like unto Christ's glorious body: He keeps strictly to the idea of a *reproduction* of the same materials; but assures us that the infinite skill and goodness of Christ will alter its properties immensely for the better.

And this change he comprehends in four particulars: 1. *It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption*; chap. xv. 42. It is sown: This is a beautiful expression, and significant allusion of committing seed to the ground, which first dies, then out of it grows fresh grain of the same kind. Perhaps the resurrection of our bodies may bear a greater analogy to vegetable production than we are wont to think. *It is sown in corruption*; just ready to putrify, and will, by various degrees of corruption and decay, return to the dust from whence it came.—*It is raised in incorruption*; into a state free from disease, free from pain, free from decay, and incapable of dissolution; quite, in these properties, the reverse of what it is now.

2. *It is sown in dishonour*: Yea, deeply so; a vile, loathsome carcase; shockingly offensive! But lately our desire, perhaps our admiration; kindling in our breast strange emotions of delight; now loathsome, and fit only to be sown in the earth among worms: A human body in deep disgrace indeed!—*It is raised in glory*: How different to what it was? Now attenuated as the air; yea, subtle as the lightening, and bright and splendid as the sun.

3. *It is sown in weakness*; yea, deprived of that little strength and activity it once had: It was always clumsy, cumbersome and impotent; now utterly deprived of all strength and motion. *It is raised in power*; freed now from all lassitude, and girded with strength; delivered from weakness, and filled with vigour; freed from grossness and heaviness, and rendered active as fire. Happy change!

4. *It is sown a natural body*; a piece of animal machinery, composed of the four elements; curiously wrought by its Maker's skill; now under the full power of mortality, and bearing part of the curse of sin.—*It is raised a spiritual body*: The Apostle still carefully preserves the notion of a *reproduction*; he does not say it is raised a *Spirit*, but a *spiritual Body*: A real body: A spiritual body opposed to the natural state in which it was sown: He could not express its improved state in stronger terms than calling it a *spiritual body*: Not a *spiritual substance*; this would confound *matter* and *Spirit*; but matter rarified to the tenuity and pureness of Ether. We must be content to call some *matter*, *Spirit*, to distinguish it from grosser and more condense matter; as the most spirituous parts of vegetables, separated from the grosser parts by the art of the *Chymist*, is called spirit itself. The resurrection body will be refined by the art of the Almighty, to the fineness, perhaps, of light; each human body like a sun-beam. This last property does in a manner include the three former, and sets it forth as a glorious body indeed; which the Lord will provide for the souls that love him! Should a *scoffing Infidel*, a *sneering Sadducee*, or *grinning Heretick*, ask now, as of old, ver. 35. *But how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?* This is the Apostle's meek reply: They come

come with an *incorruptible, powerful, glorious, and spiritual body!*

This account of the bodies of the *Saints* in the Resurrection state is applicable to the bodies of the *wicked* also in that state, so far as their wretched and wicked condition will admit of it. They too will have unperishable and vigorous bodies: Immortal to suffer, and strong to endure! They then will be deprived of their beloved sensuality, when neither their body is capable of it, nor opportunity afforded them; mean time they will be exquisitely sensible of pain and anguish!

One cannot avoid observing here how exactly Divine Justice keeps the measures of proportion: The bodies of the *Saints* watched, and fasted, and prayed, and suffered with their souls; their *members were instruments of righteousness unto holiness*; they assisted in *the works of faith, the patience of hope, and the labours of love*; how fit, therefore, that they should share in the rewards of grace, and rejoice together with their souls in heaven who had laboured together on earth. On the other hand, the bodies of the *wicked* had a great hand in seducing and corrupting their minds; they would have their senses, lusts and appetites pleased and gratified, notwithstanding the remonstrance conscience made against it; the members would be employed in the cause and practice of sin, and, therefore, it is meet that the body should partake with the soul in the just punishment of such perverseness. This proportion of reward and punishment, even had the sacred Scriptures been less explicit on the point of the Resurrection, had been no contemptible argument for it: For as it is the righteous decree of God, that *the soul that sinneth shall die,*

and not another be punished for it in eternity; so by parity of reason, the body that sinned, though not principally, shall be punished, and not the soul alone.

IV. I am fourthly, and lastly, to answer some objections to this notion of the Resurrection.

i. The rudest objection with which it is encountered is the *impossibility* of it: That it is impossible for God to effect such a Resurrection: For, say they, how can God keep in mind, and know, from the beginning to the end of time, through all the countless millions of millions of men and women that fall in all circumstances, by sea and by land, a prey to death, which particles of dust belonged to each body? This, at first sight, seems a formidable objection; but when you come to consider it coolly, you will find that it has all its weight, not from any impossibility in the thing itself, but from our littleness of mind, and our low and unworthy conceivings of the perfections of God! We are too apt to think of him in comparison with ourselves, and what is so vastly above our rate of knowing, we can hardly allow that even the infinite knowledge of God is sufficient for it! But this is our infirmity: It is partly too for want of considering his universal presence: That he is perpetually present with every particle of matter throughout the universe. If our narrow and imperfect minds will suffice us to know the little events that happen under our eye and observation; how much more is the infinite understanding of God sufficient to know what passes in his presence! and there is nothing happens, not the shifting of an atom, but before his face; for *all things are naked and open to him with whom we have to do!* And as to that part of the objection
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which relates to length of time, ages upon ages, and vast numbers of objects, though they seem difficulties to us, who are creatures of a day, yet can they not be so to the Eternal Being; with whom there is no succession of ages, but who sees all things, at all times, at one view: And what is a period of six, or twenty thousand years to him who is essentially eternal! He calleth things that are not, as though they were; *and a thousand years is with him as one day*. If these things are duly considered, he must be greatly ignorant, or stupidly full of the conceit of his own knowledge, who cannot allow that the infinite knowledge of God is sufficient to keep every particle of one man's body distinct and separate from all the rest.

2. But, say they, farther; if it was allowed that the knowledge of God is sufficient for this; yet another and a greater difficulty is, that of one body being turned into the substance of another: Men are drowned at sea, their bodies are devoured by fish, and so turned into their substance; these fish are caught, and again eaten by men, and so turned into their substance: Nay, where is the earth that has not been alive? So that in feeding on animals or vegetables there is an endless transmutation of one body into another! I allow all this, and have placed the objection in its full strength: Yet all this does not imply the shadow of a contradiction; and what does not imply a contradiction to itself, is equally easy to Almighty power, joined with infinite wisdom, to perform. He can easily provide that either those atoms which belonged to one man when he died, shall not be turned into the substance of another man, (for not all that we eat is turned into nourishment) or he shall be sure to refund them to the common mass before he dies. This
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is as easy to Almighty power and infinite wisdom, as for an *artist* to provide that his tools shall be put in a place, when he ceases to use them, where he can find them again: Or for a scholar to arrange and place his books where he can go to them. If *these* are the difficulties which lie in your way of receiving the Doctrine of the Resurrection, acquaint yourselves better with the *Divine perfections*, and they will vanish. The cloud is not on the subject so much as on your understanding. In the mean time, until you can do this, assure yourselves, that what God Almighty has promised, he is able also to perform!

3. Yet some will ask, Does not the holy Scriptures, where they speak of a Resurrection, mean our Spirits being restored from a Death in Sin to a Life of Righteousness? No: Not those Scriptures now referred to; they speak not of the Resurrection of our *Spirits* at all, but of our *Bodies*: Not of what is done for us in this life before we die, but of what shall be done for the body at the end of time; after the soul and body have been parted by death: *They who sleep in the dust shall come forth: All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God*: Not only the regenerate, but the unregenerate also; some shall come forth to everlasting life; and some to shame and everlasting contempt. To expound those passages of a *spiritual Resurrection*, is absurd and foolish; or mischievous and heretical: So we know, did *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, those antient hereticks, say, who concerning the truth erred, saying that the Resurrection is past already; and overthrew the faith of some. 2 Tim. ii. 18. These canker worms sprang up even in that age, and under the Apostles eyes, how much more may we expect it in these dregs of time!

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4. " Be it so, *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* then erred in saying that the Resurrection was *past*; this event did not happen 'till upwards of seventeen hundred years after; not 'till the days of the honourable Emanuel Swedenborg, in 1757. Then it was that those Scriptures were fulfilled, all of them that have the *internal sense*. As for the words of St. Paul, they have only the *outward letter* and carcase, and not the *hidden sense*. Then the old Christian Church died; and the new *Jerusalem Church*, under the eye and in the hands of that *divinely illuminated Baron*, arose: This is the Scripture Resurrection, and now it is no longer *heresy* to say it is *past*." —Do these people indeed believe themselves? Can they seriously think that (setting aside St. Paul) *Daniel's* words were fulfilled? Did all that *slept in the dust come forth*? Was our *Lord's* words accomplished? Did *all that were in the grave hear his voice and come forth*? They who can believe this, are fully prepared for believing any thing, provided it be absurd enough, even transubstantiation itself! If it were not a matter so infinitely hazardous to the salvation of our fellow-creatures; did it not overthrow their faith and expose them to the tremendous curse of the law, due to their sins, it would, indeed, be a proper subject of *satire and ridicule*; but as it is big with those fatal mischiefs; those who are infected with it, call for our tenderest pity; for our tears and prayers, rather than our *raillery*. And indeed what can be done for such who believe things contrary to *Scripture, sense and reason*, but commend them to the tender mercy of God?

5. To conclude, these are all the objections that at present I can think of, some of which are trifling enough; and such as have some difficulty in them, have yet no appearance of impossibility; but rather
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are easy to the infinite knowledge and Almighty power of God. The passages of Scripture which reveal this grand truth, and peculiar article of the Christian faith, are so explicit and pointed, that no other meaning can be put upon them, without a manifest wresting and perversion of them: The matter contained in this subject, is strictly consistent with an equitable distribution of rewards and punishments, if not necessary thereto, and conformable to our created, our original state, in which we consisted of body and mind; the Resurrection will restore our body, 'till then we are not compleat, but wanting in one essential part of our nature: It is intended as a part of the perfection, blessedness and glory of the *Saints*; and as a part of the condemnation and misery of the *wicked*, as is meet.

The Christian Church has ever received it, and for my own part I am thoroughly satisfied that it is a real scriptural verity, and I consider it as affording a signal instance of our Saviour's care and love, and a comfortable prospect in the world to come. I should think myself happy if what I have advanced shall be a means of clearing your thoughts, and settling your judgment on this subject. I wish you, however, to make this practical use of it, to be more strict in all the measures of *temperance, sobriety* and *chastity* on the one hand, and on the other to preserve your bodies in *health, vigor* and *activity*, by every lawful and prudent means: that they may neither be untameable, as an horse unaccustomed to the menage, nor as a blunted instrument; but fit to serve your soul in the worship and praise of God; that in both *body* and *soul* you may glorify him on earth, who intends to glorify *both* with himself in heaven: To whom be dominion and worship now and ever. AMEN.

An

An H Y M N.

1 **L**O! he comes with clouds descending,
Once for favour'd sinners slain!
Thousand, thousand Saints attending,
Swell the triumph of his train,
Hallelujah!

God appears with man to reign.

2 Ev'ry eye shall now behold him,
Rob'd in dreadful Majesty;
Those who set at nought and sold him,
Pierc'd and nail'd him to the tree,
Deeply wailing,
Shall the True Messiah see.

3 The dear token of his passion,
Still his dazzling body bears;
Cause of endless exultation,
To his ransom'd worshippers;
With what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

4 Yea! Amen! Let all adore thee,
High on thy eternal throne!
Saviour, take the pow'r and glory,
Claim the kingdom for thine own,
Jah, Jehovah,
Everlasting God come down.

F I N I S.

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